School Board Site Choice for Richmond Academy to Stand

Department of Education

News Releases

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The Strait Regional School Board's choice for building the new Richmond Academy on Whiteside Road in Louisdale will stand, Education Minister Jane Purves said today. The decision follows environmental studies that confirmed the site is suitable for school development.

"We have elected school boards, responsible for making decisions about where to build their schools," Ms. Purves said. "I am also faced with a legally binding contract with the builder, Ashford Investments. There is no more room within the budget envelope for this school, and costs of breaking or changing the contract would take dollars out of the classroom.

"Given the school board responsibility in this area and the costs of further delay, I am not prepared to overrule the board. Now that the environmental issues have been assessed, we have to move forward."

The minister met with parents from east and west Richmond, and with school board representatives in September. She received assessments from ADI environmental consultants and the Department of Environment concerning water, sewage and other issues. The Richmond County Municipality has also confirmed the sewage and new well systems have the capacity to support a new school on Whiteside Road.

"I have a lot of respect for the parents I met with, who've worked hard on this issue," Ms. Purves said. "Unfortunately, when you're building one school for more than one community, you can't make everyone happy.

"Recognizing this, we all know, young people will make the new Richmond Academy a great school, wherever it's built. With the school board decision now confirmed, I hope parents can get behind planning the new school for their children."

The new Richmond Academy is scheduled to open in September 2000. The school board has committed to provide express buses for a small number of students in the eastern corner of Richmond County.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Nova Scotia's education minister is confirming the site

chosen by the Strait Regional School Board for the new Richmond Academy.

Jane Purves says environmental studies show the Whiteside Road location in Louisdale is suitable for the school.

She says two factors influenced her decision to support the board's choice.

One, elected school boards are responsible for choosing where to build schools, and two, the province has a legally binding contract with the builder, Ashford Investments.

Purves says breaking or changing the contract with Ashford would take dollars out of the classroom.

Before approving the board's choice of site, Purves met with parents from east and west Richmond and with school board representatives.

The new Richmond Academy is slated to open in September 2000.

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